30. The method according to claim 29 wherein said mammalian cell is a cell of the central or peripheral nervous system.

31. A method of preventing or treating a viral infection, said method comprising contacting a mammalian cell with a substance identified by the method of claim 21 to inhibit binding between said first and said second components.

32. The method according to claim 31 wherein the viral infection is caused by herpes simplex virus type 1.--

IN THE ABSTRACT:

After page 40, insert the Abstract of the Disclosure submitted herewith on a separate sheet.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application and entry of the foregoing amendments are respectfully requested.

The specification has been amended to make reference to sequence identifiers and to include the Sequence Listing submitted herewith on separate sheets. Entry of the Sequence Listing does not raise the issue of new matter as the sequence information contained therein is presented in

the application as originally filed. The computer readable copy of the Sequence Listing submitted herewith is the same as the attached paper copy of that Listing.

The specification has been further amended to include the heading "Brief Description of the Drawings".

The claims have been revised to define the invention with additional clarity. Claim 1 has been revised as new claim 21 and incorporates limitations of original claim 2. The claims as presented do not include the terms "derivatives" and "homologues" objected to by the Examiner. Claims 7-13, 19 and 20 have been cancelled and corresponding claims are not presented here.

An Abstract of the Disclosure has been added, pursuant to the Examiner's request. The Abstract does not add new matter as it corresponds essentially to that on the face of the published PCT from which this application derives.

Claims 8 to 11 and 13 stand objected to as being of improper form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. In order to advance prosecution, these claims have been deleted, thereby mooting the Examiner's concerns.

Claims 1 to 18 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable

one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Withdrawal of the rejection submitted to be in order for the reasons that follow.

The Examiner has objected to the term "substance" as this term "encompasses all types of materials including chemicals and other nonbiologicals and consequently the claims are excessively broad". Applicants respectfully disagree.

The present invention relates to a method of identifying any substance which has the ability to disrupt the interaction between a herpes simplex virus (HSV) polypeptide and PCNA. The invention is based on the surprising discovery that these two polypeptides (and their derivatives and homologues) interact in the cell. It has been shown by Applicants that the disruption of this interaction has advantageous effects with regard to therapy.

Thus, Applicants have effectively provided a useful screening method to identify substances which may then be used in therapy. The Examiner has cited In re Wands and argued that the specification does not provide an enabling disclosure of the invention in such a way as to allow a person skilled in the art to practice the invention without

undue experimentation. The invention is a screening method. In order to practice the invention, the skilled person must be able to provide the first component and the second component in conditions where they can interact, contact the components with any substance, and determine whether the substance in question disrupts the interaction between the first and the second components.

The invention does not require the skilled person to have any knowledge of the substance tested. The Examiner states that "the specification fails to address the utilization of other substances such as DNA, RNA, organic solvents etc. As such the quantity of experimentation necessary would be extreme due to the lack of guidance provided by the applicant." It is not understood what quantity of experimentation is necessary. All the skilled person needs to do is contact the first and second components with the DNA, RNA or organic solvent and determine whether the interaction is disrupted or not. Indeed, the utility of these substances can be determined from the method of the invention!

In order to expedite the prosecution, Applicants have revised claim 1 (as new claim 21) to include the limitations of original claim 2.

Reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1, 2, 7, 12 and 14 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Withdrawal of the rejection, which appears to be based on the fact that these claims contain the terms "derivatives" and "homologues", in order as these terms do not appear in the present claims.

Claims 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as not containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the art that the inventors, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the invention. Claims 19 and 20 have been deleted thereby mooting the rejection.

Claims 1-20 stand rejected under U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Withdrawal of the rejection is in order in view of the above revisions and comments that follow.

Claims 1, 7 and 14 have been rejected on the basis of term "capable of". Claim 1 has now been revised (as claim 21) in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, claim 7 and claim 14 have been deleted or revised.

The Examiner has objected to the terms "disrupting" and "interaction". In order to further the prosecution, these terms have been replaced in the present claims by the expression "inhibits the binding between..." which is believed to address the Examiner's concerns.

Claim 3 has been objected to in that it contains the term "a said substance". The expression does not appear in the present claims.

Claims 3, 6, 14, 15 and 17 have been objected to owing to the term "administering". The Examiner argues that this term is vague and indefinite and leaves the skilled person unclear as to the metes and bounds of the claimed invention. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner. The term "administer" means to give or apply and given the context of the specification and the fact that it is directed in its teaching to those skilled in the relevant art, it is submitted that the term is perfectly clear in its meaning. The fact that the term may cover one or more ways of giving or applying does not make the term unclear. Rather, it ensures that adequate scope of protection is given for the invention. However, Applicants have replaced the term with "contacting a cell" merely to advance prosecution.

The Examiner has objected to the format of claim 2. The substance of this claim has now been incorporated in claim 21 using the Markush language.

The Examiner has raised several objections concerning claims 19 and 20 (on page 8 of the Action). In order to expedite the prosecution of this application, these claims have been deleted. However, this is not to be taken as an agreement with the Examiner's comments.

Reconsideration is requested.

Claims 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as lacking novelty over Roizman et al (US patent 5,834,216). These claims have now been deleted (and not re-presented), therefore the rejection is moot.

Claims 7 to 13, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 over the disclosure of Roizman et al. These claims have been deleted (and not re-presented), and therefore the rejection is moot.

This application is submitted to be in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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